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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/731,101	12/10/2003	Hitoshi Suzuki	062709-0120	4517
22428	7590	11/01/2006	EXAMINER	
FOLEY AND LARDNER LLP			BUI, HUNG S	
SUITE 500			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3000 K STREET NW				
WASHINGTON, DC 20007			2841	

DATE MAILED: 11/01/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/731,101	SUZUKI ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Hung S. Bui	2841	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-6 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-6 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 10 December 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner. Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a). Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>12/10/03 and 4/16/04</u> .	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baker et al. [US 5,712,764] in view of Burdick [US 6,621,688].

Regarding claim 1, Baker et al. disclose a structure (figure 3) for wiring a wiring harness for an automobile between an electronic control unit (a control unit includes a cassette and three knobs as shown in figure 3) and one or more devices (44), the automobile having a steering member extended from a driver's seat side of the automobile to an assistant's seat side of the automobile a control module arranged at a center in a width direction of the steering member and an electronic control unit for controlling the devices arranged at the assistant's seat side of the steering member and a plurality of units arranged at the driver's seat side, the structure comprising (figure 3):

- a support member including:

 a first portion having a first connector (a plurality of connectors as shown in a left side of the panel 36) for connection with the devices (44);
 a second portion housing the electronic control unit (a box covering the control unit as shown in figure 3); and

a third portion (a middle section connecting between the first and third sections as shown in the figure 3) being formed in a slim shape and interconnecting the first portion and the second portion; and

- a wiring harness, wherein the wiring harness interconnects the first connectors and the electronic control unit (figure 3);
- wherein the support member is arranged along the steering member in a manner that the third portion is connected between the control module and the steering member.

Baker et al. disclose the instant claimed invention except for the wiring harness being arranged in a housing member.

Burdick discloses an electrical distribution system (figures 1-3) having a wiring harness (10), wherein the wiring harness is formed in a housing member (14, figure 1).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to arrange the wiring harness in a housing member of Baker et al., as suggested by Burdick, for the purpose of protecting the wiring harness to be broken in a dashboard of a vehicle.

Regarding claim 2, Baker et al., as modified, disclose wherein a control unit has a multiple function to control such as a heater, a ventilator, an air conditioner and distribution doors (figure 3).

Regarding claim 3, Baker et al. disclose the instant claimed invention except for the electronic control unit comprising a second connector mating with the first connector, an amplifier for a meter and an air conditioner control amplifier.

Burdick discloses the control unit comprising a plurality of connectors (88, 90) mounted therein, an amplifier for a meter and air-conditioner control amplifier (column 4, line 51- column 5, line 15).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have an additional connector in Baker et al., as suggested by Burdick, for the purpose of providing additional connectors to connect different kinds of various devices.

Regarding claim 4, Baker et al., as modified, disclose wherein the first portion comprises a plurality of first connectors for connection with the devices and the control unit is arranged between the first portion and the second portion (figure 3).

Regarding claim 5, Baker et al., as modified, disclose the first connectors are formed in a unified shape having a unified terminal alignment and connected with a power bus circuit and a superimposing communication unit of the electronic control unit (figure 3, column 3, lines 17-31).

Regarding claim 6, Baker et al., as modified, the third portion is so dimensioned fitting between the control unit and the steering member.

Burdick discloses the third portion is so dimensioned as to be insertable in space from between the control unit and the steering member (figures 1-2).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the arrangement of the third portion design of Burdick in Baker et al., for the purpose of saving space to distribute the wiring harness in the structure.

Conclusion

3. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:

- Kubota [US 6,257,897] discloses a wiring harness device for instrument panels; and
- Takiguchi [US 6,062,888] discloses a wire harness device for use in instrument panesl.

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hung S. Bui whose telephone number is (571) 272-2102. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 8:30AM-6:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Elvin G. Enad can be reached on (571) 272-1990. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

10/28/06
Hung Bui
Art Unit 2841

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